

3. HOUSING CONSTRAINTS

The provision of adequate and affordable housing opportunities is an important goal of the City of Riverside. However, there are a variety of factors that can encourage or constrain the development, maintenance, and improvement of the City's housing stock. These include government codes, market mechanisms, and physical and environmental constraints. This section addresses potential market and governmental constraints.

A. Market Constraints

Land costs, construction costs, and market financing contribute to the cost of housing reinvestment, and potentially can hinder the production of affordable housing. Although many of these potential constraints are driven by market conditions, jurisdictions have some leverage in instituting policies and programs that address these constraints. This section analyzes these constraints as well as the activities that a jurisdiction can take.

1. Development Costs

Construction costs vary widely according to the type of development, with multi-family housing generally less expensive to construct than single family homes. However, there is wide variation within each construction type depending on the size of unit and the number and quality of amenities provided, such as fireplaces, swimming pools, and interior fixtures among others. Land costs may vary depending on whether the site is vacant or has an existing use which must be removed.

According to the Construction Industry Research Board, the construction cost for a typical new, single-family dwelling in the Los Angeles metropolitan area increased three-fold in the past decade, averaging about \$60 to \$100 per square foot, while new multifamily construction costs between \$50 to \$85 per square foot. However, the price may range significantly, depending upon the quality of materials used, the size of the unit and lot, the location of the home, and number of units provided.

A reduction in amenities and the quality of building materials (above a minimum acceptability for health, safety, and adequate performance) could result in lower sales prices. In addition, prefabricated factory-built housing may provide for lower priced housing by reducing construction and labor costs. Another factor related to construction costs is the number of units built at one time. As the number increases, overall costs generally decrease as builders can benefit from economies of scale.

Another key component is the price of raw land and any necessary improvements. The diminishing supply of residential land combined with a fairly high demand for such development keeps land cost relatively high in cities across Southern California. In Riverside, residential land costs vary from \$4 to \$6 per square foot (with utilities in place), the Agency can support the development of affordable housing by writing-down land costs on Agency-owned property in exchange for affordability controls.

2. Mortgage and Rehabilitation Financing

The availability of financing affects a person's ability to purchase or improve a home. Under the Home Mortgage Disclosure Act (HMDA), lending institutions must disclose information on the disposition of loan applications by the income, gender, and race of the applicants. This applies to all loan applications for home purchases and improvements, whether financed at market rate or through government assistance.

Chart 34 summarizes the disposition of applications submitted to financial institutions for home purchase and home improvement loans within Riverside. Included is information on the percentage of loans that are "approved" and "denied" by applicants of different income levels. The status of "other" loans indicate loan applications that were neither approved nor denied, but were not accepted by the applicant, or those applications that were withdrawn by the applicant.

Home Purchase Loans. In 1998, 5,157 households applied for home purchase loans in Riverside. Of that total, 53% of households applied for conventional loans, while 47% of households applied for government-assisted loans. As expected, there is a relationship between a household's income and the type of loans applied for. Lower and moderate-income households accounted for less than half the applicants for conventional loans, but over 70% the applicants for government-assisted loans.

Approval rates typically vary by the income of the household. For market-rate home purchase loans, the approval rate increased from 46% for lower income households, to 54% for moderate-income households to 62% for upper income households. Government-assisted home purchase loans have much higher approval rates. The home loan approval rate for lower income households was 78% - fairly consistent among moderate- and upper-income households.

Home Improvement Loans. According to HMDA, 1,241 households applied for home improvement loans in Riverside during 1998. Approximately three-quarters applied for conventional loans; one-quarter applied for government-assisted loans. Compared to mortgage loans, home improvement loans were much more difficult to secure, as is typical in most jurisdictions. The overall approval rates for conventional and government-assisted home improvement loans were 37% and 34% respectively.

Approval rates for home improvement loans vary according to household income. For market-rate loans, the approval rate increased from 29% for lower income households, to 31% for moderate-income to 47% for upper income households. Government assisted loans also followed the same pattern, with approval ratings increasing from 11% for lower income households to 39% for moderate-income to 42% for upper income households. For lower income households, the loan approval rate was 18% lower for government assisted loans than for conventional loans.

Chart 34: Disposition of Home Loans

Applicant Income	Home Purchase Loans: Conventional				Government-Assisted			
	Total	Approved	Denied	Other	Total	Approved	Denied	Other
Lower	544	46%	33%	21%	934	78%	8%	14%
Moderate	560	54%	23%	23%	828	77%	8%	15%
Upper	1,365	62%	17%	22%	530	76%	7%	17%
N.A.	242	43%	21%	36%	154	68%	5%	27%
Total	2,711	56%	22%	23%	2,446	77%	8%	16%

Applicant Income	Home Improvement Loans: Conventional				Government-Assisted			
	Total	Approved	Denied	Other	Total	Approved	Denied	Other
Lower	220	29%	50%	21%	54	11%	67%	22%
Moderate	245	31%	45%	25%	113	39%	37%	24%
Upper	442	47%	25%	28%	111	42%	31%	27%
N.A.	35	14%	46%	40%	21	29%	48%	24%
Total	942	37%	37%	26%	299	34%	41%	25%

Source: Home Mortgage Disclosure Act (HMDA) data, 1998

It is interesting to note that governmental assisted loans for home purchases account for almost half (47%) of all loans issued for home purchases. This is a significant number and percentage of loans and reflects a commitment to assist residents in obtaining homes. As described in Chapter V, the City will continue pursuing efforts to make homeownership opportunities available for lower income households through the Homeownership Zone and downpayment assistance project in the downtown.

With respect to lending patterns for home improvements, government assisted loans are approximately one-third the level of conventional home improvement loans. In particular, there is a sparse number of applications and approvals for lower income households to address home improvements. For the present Housing Element, Riverside, the City has set-aside \$1.1 million in CCBG funds to address the need to increase opportunities for lower income households to maintain their homes.

B. Governmental Constraints

Local policies and regulations can impact the price and availability of housing and in particular, the provision of affordable housing. Land use controls, site improvement requirements, fees and exactions, permit processing procedures, and other issues may represent potential constraints to the maintenance, development and improvement of housing. This section discusses potential governmental constraints in Riverside.

1. Land Use Controls

The Land Use Element of Riverside's General Plan sets forth the City's policies for guiding local development. These policies, together with existing zoning regulations, establish the amount and distribution of land to be allocated for different uses within the City. Housing supply and costs are affected by the amount of land designated for residential use and the density at which development is permitted. In Riverside, over 60 percent of the acreage within the General Plan Area (which includes the City's Sphere of Influence) is designated for residential use.

Growth management has been a major concern in Riverside since the mid-1970s. In 1979, residents approved Proposition R, which served to limit residential development in agricultural areas and areas with steep topographic features. Proposition R was amended in 1987 with Measure C, which prohibits the City from approving annexations until an overall General Plan for development of the Sphere of Influence is completed. Proposition R, as amended by Measure C, remains in effect unless amended or repealed by a vote of the residents. The agricultural provisions of Proposition R, which require 5-acre minimum lots, affect nearly 5,000 acres in the Arlington Heights Greenbelt, and 600 acres in Rancho La Sierra near the Santa Ana River.

The Riverside General Plan provides for a variety of residential land uses, ranging from a density of 0.2 to 6.5 dwelling units per acre in lower density residential areas, and from 15 to 25 dwelling units per acre in multi-family zones (Chart 35). While General Plan and zoning establish a maximum permitted density for each district, actual developed densities are typically below these maximums. To add a degree of flexibility, the Zoning Code thus includes the provisions that provide for densities above those in the General Plan, including use of Planned Residential Developments, density bonuses, and height bonuses through the Height Stories overlay.

In addition to residential districts, the City's General Plan includes a mixed-use residential-commercial district with residential emphasis. This land use designation provides for housing at densities of approximately 40 dwelling units per acre. Office and retail uses are allowed as secondary uses to provide opportunities for ground-floor commercial use in high-rise residential structures. While the City adopted the mixed use designation as part of the 1994 Land Use Element, the City has not yet adopted the necessary mixed use zoning regulations for implementation. One of the major focuses of this Housing Element cycle will be to develop residential/commercial mixed-use zoning regulations for the Downtown Specific Plan.

Chart 35: Residential Land Use Categories

General Plan Land Use Category	Zoning Designation	Maximum Density (du/ac)	Typical Density/ (du/ac)	Residential Type(s)
Agricultural and Rural Residential	RA	0.2	0.2	Associated single-family residential use on large agricultural holdings/open parcel.
Hillside Residential	RC	0.6	0.2	Residential development on hillsides with slopes over 15%.
Estate Residential	HR, RA, RA-2, R-1-125, R-1-130	2.5	1.0	Single-family, low density residential development.
Semi-Rural Residential	RR	2.5	1.5	Single-family residential with livestock on premises; rural character.
Low Density Residential	R-1-80, R-1-100, R-1-125, R-1-130	5.0	3.0	Single-family houses on moderately large lots.
Medium Density Residential	R-1-65, R-1-80, R-1-100, R-1-125	6.5	4.0	Single-family houses on standard urban lots.
Medium High Density Residential	R-2, R-3-30, R-3-40	15.0	12.0	Predominantly low density apartments, duplexes, or cluster development.
High Density Residential	R-2, R-3, R-3-20, R-3-30, R-3-40, R-3-R	25.0	20.0	Higher density multi-family projects, i.e. apartments and condominiums outside downtown.
Mixed Use - Residential Emphasis		Unlimited	40.0	High-rise residential buildings primarily located in downtown.

Sources: Land Use Element, City of Riverside General Plan, 1994
Riverside Municipal Zoning Code, 1999

Specific Plans Riverside makes extensive use of specific plans to provide focused planning and development standards tailored to the unique characteristics of an area and has adopted 15 specific plans to date. The major areas of future residential growth remaining within Riverside are governed by the following specific plans: Orangecrest, Mission Grove, La Sierra and University, and Sycamore Highlands.

The Specific Plan process provides an additional degree of flexibility from residential development standards established within the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances. To meet special needs, infrastructure requirements can be modified. Clustering and similar techniques can be used to accommodate smaller lots than the Zoning Ordinance normally permits. This is usually done in exchange for the retention of additional open space or the provision of additional amenities.

2. Residential Development Standards

Riverside regulates the type, location, density, and scale of residential development primarily through the Zoning Ordinance. Zoning regulations are designed to protect and promote the health, safety, and general welfare of residents and implement policies of the General Plan. The Zoning Ordinance also serves to preserve the character and integrity of existing neighborhoods. Key provisions are noted below.

Site Requirements. Minimum lot area varies from 7,000 to 21,780 square feet in low-density (R-1) districts to a range of 6,500 to 8,000 square feet in higher density (R-2 and R-3) districts. Minimum lot width also varies, from 60 to 150 feet in low-density single family districts to 65 feet in multifamily districts. The maximum lot coverage is 50% for multi-family developments in R-3 zones. In addition, the maximum height limit is set at 35 feet (2 stories). However, height increases are achievable in the R-3-H zone, which allows structures up to 170 feet (typically in the Downtown), or through use of the S (Stories) combining zone for apartments. The S-zone requires discretionary zoning approval from the Planning Commission and City Council which average 90 days from submittal of application. This mechanism was applied to the 3-story Castlerock and Windermere developments.

Parking Requirements. The parking requirement for single family, two-family and duplex dwellings is one parking space in a garage or carport for each dwelling unit, with the exception of homes in the RC zone which requires each unit to have at least two spaces. For multi-family dwellings, 1.5 parking spaces are required for each unit with one bedroom, and two spaces for each unit with two or more bedrooms. At least one parking space required for each multi-family unit shall be in a garage, and at least 75 percent of the total required spaces shall be in a garage or carport. For mobile home parks, the requirement is two spaces for each mobile home space.

Open Space Requirements. The Zoning Code stipulates common usable open space requirements in all multi-family zones. The minimum open space required is 125 square feet per efficiency unit, 250 square feet per bedroom for each unit having two or fewer bedrooms, and 500 square feet per bedroom for each unit with three or more bedrooms. Private usable open space is also required for units with two or more bedrooms at a rate of 250 square feet for ground floor units and 50 feet for second story units and above. Coupled with a maximum lot coverage of 50% for R-3 developments, open space requirements effectively reduce the achievable densities below the maximum permitted 29 units per acre (for a PRD in the R-3 zone).

Planned Residential Developments (PRDs). In addition to specific plans, another mechanism used extensively in Riverside to provide flexibility in development standards is through Planned Residential Developments (PRD). A planned residential development refers to two or more dwelling units together with related land, buildings and structures planned and developed as a whole in single development operation. The City utilizes PRDs to provide greater flexibility in the design of residential properties, to promote a more desirable living environment, and to encourage a more efficient use of land and a variety of housing types.

HOUSING CONSTRAINTS

PRDs may be permitted in any residential zone, subject to the granting of a planned residential development permit, with the exception of the Residential Agricultural (RA) and Residential Three (R-3-H) zones. The Zoning Ordinance provides for benchmark densities for PRDs provided certain conditions are met. For example, PRDs within R-3 zones are permitted at densities up to 29 units per acre, with a 10-percent increase permitted for superior project design. Since 1990, the City has approved approximately 30 PRDs. Typically, PRDs include density bonuses, which are usually granted based on a high quality site design rather than the type of use.

Family Housing Standards. In the R-3 zone, wherever a project contains more than 15% of the units with three or more bedrooms, the City's family housing standards apply. These standards require family housing to conform to two key locational criteria: 1) the location of a public school within a one-quarter-mile radius that is capable of absorbing the children to be living in the proposed project; and 2) the availability of shopping with a three-quarter mile radius of the project. In order to better facilitate family housing developments, the City will be eliminating this requirement as described more fully in Chapter 5, the Housing Plan.

Building Codes. Local building codes also affect the cost of housing. The City has adopted and enforces Uniform Building Code standards. The Code establishes standards pertaining to the construction of housing and requires inspections at various stages of construction to ensure code compliance. Although these standards and the time required for inspections may affect housing cost, the intent of the codes and their enforcement is to provide structurally sound, safe, energy efficient housing.

Chart 36: Residential Development Standards

Development Standard	Zoning Category						
	RA	RC	RR	HR	R-1*	R-2	R-3
Maximum Density (du/ac)	0.2	0.6	2.5	2.5	6.5	15.0	29.0
Minimum lot area (sq.ft.)	43,560	21,780	20,000	35,000	7,000	6,500	8,000
Minimum lot width & depth	150 x 250	130 x 200	100 x 150	110 x 250	60 x 100	65 x 100	65 x 100
Front yard (ft.)	40	30	30	30	20	25	15
Side yard (ft.)	20	25	20	15	7.5-10	10	7.5
Rear yard (ft.)	25	25	100	150	25	20	15
Maximum lot coverage (%)	30		30	35	40	30	50
Maximum bldg. height (stories)	2 (35 ft)	1 (20 ft.)	2 (35 ft.)	2 (35 ft.)	2 (35 ft.)	2 (35 ft.)	2 (30 ft.)
Min. dwelling size (sq.ft.)	750	750	750	750	750	500	450-750**
Parking Req. (space/unit)	1	2	1	1	1	1	1.5 (1br) 2 (2+ br)

Source: Riverside Municipal Zoning Code, 1999

* Standards presented are for R-1-65 as this is the most prevalent R-1 zone district

** Ranges by bedrooms, from 450 sq.ft. for efficiency units to 750 sq.ft. for 3-bedroom units.

3. Provisions for a Variety of Housing

Housing element law specifies that jurisdictions must identify adequate sites, with appropriate zoning and development standards in place, to encourage the development of various types of housing for all economic segments of residents. This includes single family housing, multifamily housing, factory-built and mobile-homes, emergency shelters, farm-worker and transitional housing among others.

Chart 37 summarizes housing types permitted within primary residential zones. Riverside provides the full range of housing opportunities, including housing for groups identified in the special needs analysis portion of this Housing Element. A description of each housing opportunity for special needs is described below.

Chart 37: Housing Types by Zone Category

Housing Types Permitted	RA	RC	RR	HR	R-1	R-2	R-3
Residential Uses							
Single-family	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Duplex (2 units)						✓	✓
Multi-family (3 or more)							✓ ⁽¹⁾
Factory-built	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓
Mobile homes					c	c	c
Granny Flats	c	c	c	c	c		
Planned Residential Development		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Special Needs Housing							
Group Housing							
Transitional housing	c		c	c	c	c	c
Emergency shelter	c		c	c	c	c	c
Single-room occupancy units							c
Care facilities							
Residential Care Facilities	c		c	c	c	c	c
Adult Day Care	c		c	c	c	c	c
Other Residential Uses							
Fraternity or Sorority							c
Boarding House							✓
Dormitory							c
Agricultural Caretaker Quarters	c						

Source: Riverside Municipal Zoning Code, 1999

✓ = Permitted c = Conditionally Permitted

1. Multi-family projects greater than 3 acres in size are subject to Planning Commission approval.

HOUSING CONSTRAINTS

Besides single family and multifamily housing, Riverside encourages housing opportunities that are available for all economic segments of the community. These include individuals earning lower income, seniors, students, the homeless, and other more vulnerable residents identified in the special needs section.

Granny Flats. The City conditionally permits granny flats in all low to medium density residential zones (RA, RC, RR, HR, R-1). Specifically, these residential zones provide for the development of an auxiliary dwelling unit that can be attached to or detached from the primary dwelling unit on a property. Granny flats require a minor conditional use permit (CUP). There have been 35 applications for “granny flats” since 1990 and while these units help provide low cost rental housing, the City is not reliant on them to address its RHNA described in Chapter 4.

Mobile Homes/Manufactured Housing. Riverside has 2,100 mobile homes. Mobile home parks are conditionally permitted in the R-1, R-2, and R-3 zones provided that the specified requirements are met. The Zoning Ordinance stipulates that the mobile home parks must have a gross area of not less than 10 acres, with a minimum of 250 feet of frontage on a dedicated public street and not exceeding 10 mobile home spaces per net acre. Pursuant to State law, the City permits manufactured housing in all single-family residential zone districts.

Transitional Housing/Emergency Shelters. The Riverside Zoning Ordinance provides for transitional housing and emergency shelters for the homeless in the following residential zones subject to a conditional use permit: RA, R-1, R-2, R-3, RH, and RR. In addition, the CUP is subject to design review. The City has received approximately 22 applications for conditional use permits to allow assisted living facilities, senior apartments, transitional housing, homeless centers, group housing, elderly care facilities, and board and care facilities in the specified residential zones.

Residential Care Facilities. The Riverside Zoning Ordinance provides for board and care homes for the aged, convalescent and nursing facilities, homes for mentally disabled, developmentally disabled, and other group living situations. These facilities are provided in single family zones, except RC, pursuant to a conditional use permit. As discussed earlier under special needs services, the City has over 200 licensed community care facilities providing shelter for nearly 3,500 persons. Group homes providing care for six or less persons are permitted in residential zones by right.

Agricultural Caretaker. Riverside history as an agricultural community is reflected in the Zoning Code. The Code provides for a Residential Agricultural Zone (RA) for general agricultural purposes and allows for agricultural caretaker living quarters to be established within this zone. These quarters are subject to a CUP and occupancy is limited to the agricultural caretaker and his or her family. The agricultural caretaker must be a full-time employee of the onsite agricultural business.

Student Housing. As home to several colleges and universities, Riverside permits fraternities, sororities, and dormitories for students in its R-3 multifamily district. As of the 1990 Census, over 2,100 persons live in dormitories and student housing. Plans are underway for significant expansion of these facilities to meet expected increases in enrollment at the University of California campus. Currently, the City has recently approved the construction of a 700-unit dormitory for students.

4. Development Permit Procedures

The City of Riverside can encourage the ongoing construction, maintenance, and improvement of housing by decreasing, to the extent possible, the time and uncertainty involved in gaining approvals for various development permits. This section outlines the general development permit procedures in Riverside.

State law requires communities work toward improving the efficiency of their building permit and review processes by providing “one-stop” processing. The Permit Streamlining Act (passed in 1978) helped reduce governmental delays by (1) limiting processing time in most cases to one year, and (2) by requiring agencies to specify the information needed to complete an acceptable application. Chart 38 summarizes the approximate time frames for development review procedures in Riverside.

Chart 38: Development Review Time Frames

Residential Type	Building Permit Process	Design Review Board (RC Zone single-and all multi-family)	Zoning Administrator (Variance)	Planning Commission Review (Map/ PRD/Variance)
Single-Family	1 month	1 month	1 month	3 months (CEQA) 1 mo. (non-CEQA)
Multi-Family	1 month	1 month	1 month	3 months (CEQA) 1 mo. (non-CEQA)

Source: Planning Department, City of Riverside, 1999

Not all residential projects must go through the four development review processes. New single-family homes that conform to zoning only complete the building permit process, while multi-family projects (less than 3 acres) only require a building permit and design review. However, if a project does go through each stage, the aggregate timeframes are approximately 90 days for both single and multi-family projects if each stage is done consecutively. Typically, reviews are performed simultaneously.

Larger multi-family projects greater than three acres in size must also have their plot plan reviewed and approved by staff and the Planning Commission. This is because the City has determined that larger projects have the greatest potential for impacting surrounding neighborhoods. Once the project is approved by the Planning Commission, the City Council reviews the Planning Commission’s findings. The process takes from 90-120 days to be completed.

The time required for Planning Commission review of tract maps, planned residential developments, or zone variances varies from one to three months, depending on whether environmental review (under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)) is necessary. In the best scenario, project review takes six (6) months, including CEQA review. The timeframe depends on the completeness of the initial application and the applicant’s completion of requirements in a timely manner.

5. Fees and Exactions

The City of Riverside collects fees from developments to cover the costs of processing permits and providing the necessary services and infrastructure related to new development. Fees are calculated based on the average cost of processing a particular type of case. The City performs a full cost analysis annually to update user fees for streamlined processes and other changes in services offered. Chart 39 is a listing summarizing planning, development, and other fees charged.

Chart 39: Planning Development Fees

Service Provided	Flat Fees
<i>Planning and Development</i>	
Rezoning Request	\$2,365 (first lot/acre)
Development Agreement	\$5,830
General Plan Amendment	\$5,225
Specific Plan Amendment	\$6,820
Conditional Use Permit	\$1,122 or \$3,850 (first lot/acre)
Minor or Major Variance	\$231 or \$286 (first lot/acre)
Tentative Tract Map	\$4,829
Design Review	\$396 (plot plan and elevations) for single-family residences in RC zone
Plan Check Fee	Varies by value of property For typical homes (valued between \$100,001 to \$500,000): \$639.50 for the first \$100,000, plus \$35 for each add'l \$10,000 or fraction thereof
<i>Additional Fees</i>	
Storm Drain Fee	Based on the roof area. Single-family: \$186 for the first 750 sq.ft.; \$28 per 100 sq.ft. for rest of roof area. All other buildings: same formula with a limit of 3,000 sq.ft. If more than 3,000 sq.ft., \$0.06 per sq.ft. for amount of roof over 3,000 sq.ft.
Regional Park Fee	\$2,535 per acre of lot. Applies to new residential and new apartments.
Local Park Fee	Single-family: \$2,490/unit Duplex, triplex, quadplex: \$2,035/unit Multiple-family (5+ units): \$1,484/unit Mobile home space: \$1,344/unit

Source: Planning Department, City of Riverside, 1999

HOUSING CONSTRAINTS

Impact fees are assessed by cities to offset the cost of providing public services such as streets, water, sewage treatment and disposal, storm drainage, police and fire protection, libraries, landscaping, traffic control, and so forth. In assessing whether developer fees are a constraint to housing reinvestment, two general rules of thumb apply: first, whether the fee is reasonably related to the development impact; and second, whether the fee is reasonable in comparison to surrounding cities.

State law requires that impact fees have a substantial nexus to the development and that the dedication of land or fees be proportional to its impact. Like all cities, Riverside is required to abide by State law with respect to fees and exactions and has conducted an exhaustive cost allocation service through its Finance Department. Therefore, the City's impact fees are assumed to be in compliance with State law.

With respect to the second criteria, the City's impact fees are relatively low in comparison with other Inland Empire jurisdictions, according to a 1997 study comparing impact fees charged by cities in Riverside and San Bernardino counties. In particular, the City's impact fees for single-family developments are among the lowest: the average development impact fee for a single-family home in Riverside is about \$9,380, comparing to an average of \$11,103 for all cities surveyed (Chart 40).

The amount of development impact fees charged for multi-family projects in Riverside is less than that levied in over half of the cities surveyed. The City's impact fee is approximately \$7,200 per multi-family unit, noticeably lower than the average of \$8,187 for all cities. Considering that the City charges relatively low fees, development impact fees are not a constraint to housing development in Riverside.

Chart 40: Comparison of Development Impact Fees

Jurisdiction	Single-Family Residential	Multi-Family Residential
Redlands	\$15,947	\$12,048
Rancho Cucamonga	\$15,260	\$9,094
Fontana	\$13,618	\$10,526
Loma Linda	\$12,934	\$9,957
Chino	\$11,316	\$7,856
San Bernardino	\$9,707	\$6,586
Rialto	\$9,602	\$6,546
Riverside	\$9,380	\$7,195
Colton	\$8,820	\$7,135
Upland	\$8,671	\$7,888
Ontario	\$6,882	\$5,244
Average	\$11,103	\$8,187

Source: Comparison of Development Impact Fees, Wildan Associates, 1997

6. Building Codes and Enforcement

The City of Riverside has adopted the latest Uniform Building Code standards. The Code establishes standards pertaining to the construction of housing and requires inspections at stages of construction to ensure compliance with building codes. Although these standards and the time required for inspections affect housing costs, the codes are intended to provide structurally sound, safe, energy efficient housing.

The City's building code requires new residential construction to comply with the federal American with Disabilities Act (ADA). ADA provisions include requirements for a minimum percentage of dwelling units in new developments to be fully accessible to the physically disabled. Provision of fully accessible units increase the overall project development costs. However, like the UBC, enforcement of ADA requirements is not at the discretion of the City, but is mandated under federal law.

Compliance with building code and ADA requirements does increase the cost of housing production. Code compliance can also impact the financial feasibility of rehabilitating older properties that must be brought into compliance with current code standards for safety purposes. To the extent the increase in compliance costs make the cost of housing production or rehabilitation economically infeasible, then building codes could serve as a constraint to housing production or preservation.

C. Environmental Constraints

Environmental issues such as steep topography, seismic hazards, unsuitable soil conditions, hydrology and flood plains, sensitive habitat and species, and other conditions could constrain the amount and type of residential development. Because of the size and location Riverside, the City is subject to varying environment constraints. This section briefly details these constraints and how they are addressed. The vacant land inventory and densities used to evaluate the potential for residential development (Chapter IV) take into account the aforementioned environmental constraints.

Land Characteristics

Steep slopes are a limiting factor for development due to soil instability and potential for land failure, particularly where excessive or improper grading has occurred. Hillside development often results in higher unit costs for the extension of infrastructure, poor aesthetics, and greater difficulty in providing public services. As a result, slopes of 15% or greater grade require special design attention and lower development densities. Principal areas include the Box Springs Mountains, Alessandro Heights and Norco Hills.

While there are no faults in the General Plan Area, there are several faults in the region that could produce earthquakes impacting Riverside. The San Andreas, San Jacinto, and Elsinore faults are within 20 miles of Riverside and the Whittier and San Gabriel faults are within 35 miles. The primary seismic hazards in Riverside are ground shaking and potential liquefaction, the primary area being along the Santa Ana River and southwest portion of Riverside alongside and south of the 91 Freeway.

Floodplains are generally not appropriate sites for intense urban development. Several areas could be impacted in Riverside. The potential for inundation from dam failure exists in parts of Riverside adjacent to Lake Matthews, including portions of the Arlanza/La Sierra Area, Arlington, Arlington Heights and Rancho El Sobrante areas. The areas surrounding the University Wash, Spring Brook, Mockingbird Canyon, and Woodcrest Arroyo are also subject to flooding by tributary streams.

Plant and Animal Resources

Encroachment of urban development into natural habitat areas can threaten the existence of certain plant and animal species. The two major plant communities in Riverside are inland sage scrub and valley grassland. Riparian woodlands also are present in portions of the Santa Ana River floodplain and along other natural water-courses. Most of the development in Riverside has occurred in valley grassland areas. The largest stands of grasslands are in Sycamore Canyon and the Santa Ana River.

Approximately 40 rare, threatened or endangered plant and animal species have been identified in or near Riverside. A Habitat Conservation Plan was prepared to protect the Stephen's Kangaroo Rat. In addition, Riverside was involved in a multi-jurisdictional effort to identify, acquire and otherwise protect sites that can provide permanent habitat reserves for this endangered animal. The City is working with the appropriate agencies to ensure that other sensitive plant and animal resources are protected.